Introduction on Hydrogen as an alternative fuel

*329. SHRI EKANATH K. THAKUR: Will the Minister of NON-CONVENTIONAL ENERGY SOURCES be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have set up a high powered committee and given it six weeks to finalize a 'Road Map' for introduction of hydrogen as an alternative fuel in the country;

(b) if so, the comparative advantages of developing hydrogen as an energy source; and

(c) the estimated cost of doing this?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF NON-CONVENTIONAL ENERGY SOURCES (SHRI M. KANNAPPAN): (a) The Planning Commission have constituted a Group on Hydrogen Energy under the chairmanship of Member (Energy), Planning Commission. The terms of reference of the Group include examining steps for accelerating progress and compressing the time frame for achieving commercial viability of specific hydrogen energy applications; suggesting areas of comparative advantage for India among the various end-uses of hydrogen; and suggesting measures for research and commercial collaborations with recognized and established international work in this sector. The Group has been given six weeks to submit its Report.

(b) and (c) Hydrogen Energy has the potential of providing a safe, clean and non-polluting alternative to fossil fuels. A comprehensive R&D programme on Hydrogen Energy is being implemented in the country, with the support of the Government, on different aspects of hydrogen, including its production, storage and utilization. As a result of research and development projects supported by the Government, hydrogen energy utilization has been demonstrated in two-wheelers, power generating units, catalytic burners, fuel cells for stationary, portable and vehicular applications, among other uses. Hydrogen energy and its utilization are in the development and demonstration stage.